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Executive Director

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **VIETNAM EDUCATION FOUNDATION (VEF): PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION OF THE 2013 COHORT AND 5<sup>th</sup> ALUMNI CONFERENCE**

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**Hanoi, June 4, 2013** – [The Vietnam Education Foundation \(VEF\)](http://www.vef.gov), an independent U.S. Federal Government agency, is pleased to announce that 47 new Fellows will begin graduate studies and 4 new Visiting Scholars will undertake professional development programs at 32 leading universities in the United States (see the list below) during the upcoming academic year 2013-2014. The VEF Fellowship Program and the VEF Visiting Scholar Program are two of the outstanding educational programs offered by VEF in its efforts to build the relationship between Vietnam and the United States through educational exchange and capacity building. To prepare the new Fellows and Visiting Scholars for their transition to the United States, VEF provides a comprehensive Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO) program to be held this year from June 9-14, 2013, in Nha Trang city, Khanh Hoa province, Vietnam. On this occasion, VEF is also pleased to announce that the 5<sup>th</sup> VEF Alumni Conference, whose theme is *VEF Alumni: Giving Back to Vietnam*, will be held from June 14-16, 2013 in collaboration with Nha Trang University. VEF began operations in 2003 and the year 2013 marks its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The PDO and the 5<sup>th</sup> Alumni Conference are parts of the events in the year that celebrate this important milestone in the history of VEF.

Of the 47 new VEF Fellows, 40 will be pursuing doctoral degrees while 7 will be enrolled in master's degree programs at high ranking U.S. universities in various fields of science, technology, engineering, and medicine. The fields include agriculture, biological and biomedical sciences, computer science, engineering, engineering technology, physical sciences, and public health. The specializations in the field of engineering include biosystems, civil and environmental, electrical and computer, industrial, macromolecular, materials, and mechanical engineering. With this 11<sup>th</sup> cohort, VEF has placed a total of 467 Fellows at 92 leading U.S. universities since 2003 when the VEF Fellowship Program began operations.

In addition, this year the 7<sup>th</sup> cohort of Visiting Scholars will pursue self-designed postdoctoral training programs at leading U.S. universities for up to 12 months, focusing on various fields in science and technology, including material science,

electrical engineering, plant pathology. With this new cohort, VEF has awarded a total of 42 Visiting Scholar grants since the Visiting Scholar Program began in 2007.

Dr. Lynne A. McNamara, VEF Executive Director, commented, “We are extremely pleased with this outstanding 2013 cohort of 47 Fellows and 4 Visiting Scholars who will join the ever-growing VEF network of U.S.-educated scientists and engineers, and who will make tremendous contributions to Vietnam. The 2013 cohort succeeded in receiving the VEF Fellowships and Visiting Scholar Grants through a highly competitive selection process based on the candidates’ intellectual and academic merit. Congratulations to the new Fellows and Visiting Scholars and to their families, who have helped them reach this point in beginning a remarkable journey that will help them fulfill their dreams! VEF is also delighted that VEF Alumni hold important positions in the academic, corporate, and development sectors upon their return to Vietnam.”

The extensive PDO for the 2013 Fellows and Visiting Scholars includes an outdoor experiential learning/team building program that will help strengthen their identity as VEF Fellows and Scholars. The skills and experiences gained from these activities will be useful for upcoming experiences in the United States. Two additional days of lectures and presentations, addressing immigration and visa matters, financial issues, health issues, travel and insurance requirements, cultural adaptation, life in the United States, academic expectations, and maintaining connections to Vietnam will help them prepare for their transition to the United States.

The 5<sup>th</sup> VEF Alumni Conference serves as a forum for VEF alumni to discuss and lay out a plan of actions for prospective collaborative project(s), so that they can maximize their contributions to Vietnam. Doing so will create a strong VEF alumni network, which will serve as a firm foundation for the growing relationship between Vietnam and the United States. The Conference will highlight the achievements and contributions of the VEF alumni, identify the most significant means of preparing Fellows and Visiting Scholars to return to Vietnam, and illustrate how best to apply one’s experience in the United States to the Vietnamese environment.

For more information about VEF, please visit the VEF website at: [www.vef.gov](http://www.vef.gov)

**U.S. UNIVERSITIES (32) HOSTING VEF FELLOWS (47) AND VISITING SCHOLARS (4)  
COHORT 2013**

No.	U.S. University
1	Arizona State University
2	Case Western Reserve University
3	Cornell University
4	Kent State University
5	Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center
6	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
7	Michigan State University
8	Northwestern University
9	Oregon State University
10	Rutgers University

No.	U.S. University
11	Texas A&M University
12	University of Arkansas
13	University of California at Davis
14	University of California at Santa Barbara
15	University of Connecticut
16	University of Florida
17	University of Houston
18	University of Illinois at Chicago
19	University of Iowa
20	University of Kentucky
21	University of Michigan at Ann Arbor
22	University of Mississippi
23	University of Missouri at Columbia
24	University of Nebraska Medical Center
25	University of New Orleans
26	University of Notre Dame
27	University of Oklahoma
28	University of Pittsburgh
29	University of Southern California
30	University of Texas at Arlington
31	University of Texas at Austin
32	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University